

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7608
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, SF, MILI
SUBJ: COLORED "LEADERS" VISIT NAMIBIAN BORDER

REF: CAPE TOWN 1455

1. THIRTEEN "LEADERS" OF SOUTH AFRICAN COLORED COMMUNITY PAID A THREE DAY VISIT TO SWA BORDER AREA LAST WEEK, AS GUESTS OF SADF.
2. THE GROUP WAS FLOWN TO SWA FROM PRETORIA IN A DEFENSE FORCE DAKOTA, AND VISITED ONDONGWA, OSHAKATI, RUACANGA, RUNDU, OMEGA AND THE BAGANI AIR BASE. THE PARTY ALSO MET WITH OVAMBO AND KAVANGO LEADERS, AND VISITED THE COLUEQUE DAM ("TO SEE THE MPLA").
3. COLOURED REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS IN GROUP INCLUDED CRC CHAIRPERSON ALTHEA JANSEN, FREEDOM PARTY LEADER DR. BERGINS, AND LEADER OF CRL INDEPENDENTS, JAC RABIE.

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4. TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE, SONNY LEON, (THEN) HEAD OF LABOUR PARTY, ALSO MADE THE TOUR. HIS PARTICIPATION WAS SUBSEQUENTLY CRITICIZED BY OTHER COLORED LEADERS SUCH AS DAVID CURRY, NORMAN DANIELS, AND NORMAN MIDDLETON, WHO HAD BEEN INVITED BY SAG TO MAKE THE TRIP, BUT HAD DECLINED. CRITICISM OF LEON'S PARTICIPATION MAY WELL HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE FACTORS LEADING TO HIS

RESIGNATION LAST SUNDAY (REFTEL).

5. WITH EXCEPTION OF LEON, GROUP CONTAINED LARGELY SAG SUPPORTERS. MOST CAME BACK FROM TRIP URGING INCREASED COLORED INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE EFFORT; THIS SEEMS TO BE WHAT SAG HOPED TO GET OUT OF THE EXERCISE.

6. MANY, FURTHERMORE, SEEMED GENUINELY IMPRESSED BY THE DEGREE OF RACIAL MIXING AND ENLIGHTENED RACIAL ATTITUDES THEY FOUND IN THE BORDER CAMPS. DR. BERGINS CHARACTERIZED CHIEF OF DEFENSE FORCES MAGNUS MALAN AS A "GREAT" PERSON FOR IMPROVING THE LOT OF THE COLORED MAN IN THE ARMY. ONE IN GROUP NOTED THAT RUACANA BASE HAD COLORED OFFICER AS SECOND IN COMMAND, WHOM HE SAW BEING SALUTED BY WHITE SOLDIERS.

7. SOME IN GROUP, HOWEVER, WERE STRUCK BY THE ANOMALY OF COLOREDS HAVING TO PUT ON UNIFORM AND TRAVEL 1000 MILES TO BE TREATED AS EQUALS, ONLY TO FACE BARRIERS AGAIN IN CIVILIAN LIFE. COMMENTED ONE GROUP MEMBER, COLORED CLOTHING STORE DIRECTOR G.G. CORNELISSEN: "THERE'S A VERY BIG AREA TO DEFEND ALONG THE BORDER AND ONE RACE CAN'T DO IT ALONE. ALL THE RACES WILL HAVE TO BE INVOLVED, AND TO GET THIS, THEY MUST GIVE OUR PEOPLE FULL CITIZENSHIP."
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AHLGREN

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